

Inclusion

Explanation for Athletes

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion means making sure everyone has a place on the team, regardless of their skill level, experience or characteristics. It means accepting and embracing differences, giving everyone the chance to join in, and creating a respectful, supportive and welcoming environment for all.



"We must collectively choose to let our differences bring us together rather than divide us."

Caroline Ouellette, coach of the Concordia Stingers

Why is Inclusion Important?

Inclusion promotes a strong sense of team spirit, enhances overall performance and fosters well-being. When everyone feels welcome on the team, we can work together to reach our goals. In addition, when people are part of a group, they feel comfortable asking for help and expressing their needs, which in turn, improves their performance and overall well-being.

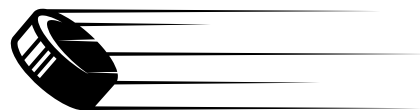
How can we be Inclusive?

- 1 Don't form gangs, cast others aside, or use hurtful language when talking about differences.



How can we be Inclusive? (continued)

2 Get to know your teammates:



- Learn their names
- Support each other through tough times
- Appreciate their unique strengths
- Choose nicknames that people like
- Celebrate the good times
- Get to know their interests and find things you have in common



i Team-building activities are great opportunities to promote inclusion.

“We made sure all the kids learned each other’s names and knew three things about one another.”

Alex Burrows, consultant for the Montreal Canadiens

Feedback and Discussions

Reinforce:

- Congratulate players who take an interest in their teammates and explain how their behaviour has a positive impact on both their well-being and that of the team.
- Encourage a player with a positive leadership role to include a teammate who is left out.

Reteach: If players exclude others or use hurtful language about differences, remind them about the importance of inclusion. Ask them how they can foster inclusion on the team.

Is your player very emotional? Try to help them manage their emotions before focusing on inclusion (see the *Managing Your Emotions* life skill).

Do they exclude others to make sure they win? Encourage them to concentrate on improving their skills and having fun, instead of just winning (see the *Development Mindset* life skill).

Award the *Inclusion sticker* to a player and explain how they’re fostering inclusion or preventing exclusion.